

WELCOME! TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER!

Some members of the West of Wells Neighborhood (and that means you if you would like to contribute!) have come together to publish this monthly newsletter about goings on, ideas, meetings, and projects that are happening in our neighborhood. We plan to bring you neighborhood news as well as thoughts from your neighbors. Like our neighborhood group, we hope that this newsletter will be a forum for the West of Wells, or "Island" residents to connect, communicate, and come together around the neighborhood that we love ♥

NEWS

Initiative Begun In Our Neighborhood Catches On Citywide

At the Feb 10th City council meeting, which included the final passage of an ordinance to limit the number of liquor stores on Wells Avenue, Councilmember Gustin had an additional item added to the agenda to discuss how similar changes could be implemented throughout the city. The Council approved the staff time to begin work on the issue. Gustin's request reflects something that we in the Wells Avenue neighborhood are already aware of - that limiting these stores in one area only causes them to increase disproportionately in adjacent areas. This is what happened on Wells when stores were limited in the downtown area, and what is now happening in the Midtown area along Virginia Street as a result of the limits on Wells. He also brought attention to the issue of the drug paraphernalia that is sold in these stores (many sell an array of pipes that are commonly used to smoke Meth).

We are proud, once again, to be the squeaky wheel! Thanks to everyone in the neighborhood who spent time working on this issue!

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING UPDATE

We had a great turnout again for our February meeting. RPD beat officer Jarel Hallert was there to meet us and give us an overview of recent crimes in the neighborhood. Officer Hallert reported that crime was down overall and took questions from the group. We also had a group discussion and vote about our new WOW logo, and talked about when to use Reno Direct. Barrie gave an overview of the upcoming Roots for Wells tree planting project, scheduled April 24, 2010 and Marcus White, Councilwoman Sferrazza's new liaison, introduced himself to the group. There was also some good news reported back from the City, that most of the new streetlights we asked for have been installed. Some corners and blocks that were potential hazards for pedestrians and drivers are now well lit!

Angie Borrayo from RPD's Graffiti Enforcement Team will be at our March meeting to give us a presentation about how to recognize and report graffiti. Angie does a great presentation with illustrations of different types of graffiti and how to recognize them. She will also talk about how important it is to report graffiti promptly to ensure that taggers are caught and that RPD has the evidence they need to convict them. (call 334-INFO to report graffiti!)

Our next meeting will be Tuesday March 9 at 6pm at El Cordero de Dios church on the corner of Wheeler and Crampton streets. Also we plan to have our fliers printed by this meeting so that those who are able can take a stack to pass out in their part of the neighborhood. Thanks to John Perez for designing a beautiful flier, and to Marcus and the City of Reno for helping us get them printed! The fliers will advertise our meetings, and provide tips for crime prevention.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & DATES

Next Neighborhood Meeting – March 9, 6pm at El Cordero De Dios, Crampton & Wheeler

Next Wells Ave Merchants Meeting – Thursday, March 11, 6:30 Rainshadow HS, Vesta St

Roots for Wells Avenue – April 24 Neighborhood tree planting

Historic Walking Tour of Wells Avenue – Tuesday, May 8, 6pm, Southside School (\$10)

Fiesta on Wells Avenue – June 13, call Roseanne at 324-4677 for booths or to participate!

Look for Barrie's article on the Wells Avenue Neighborhood in the next quarterly issue of the Historic Reno Preservation Society's FootPrints Newsletter

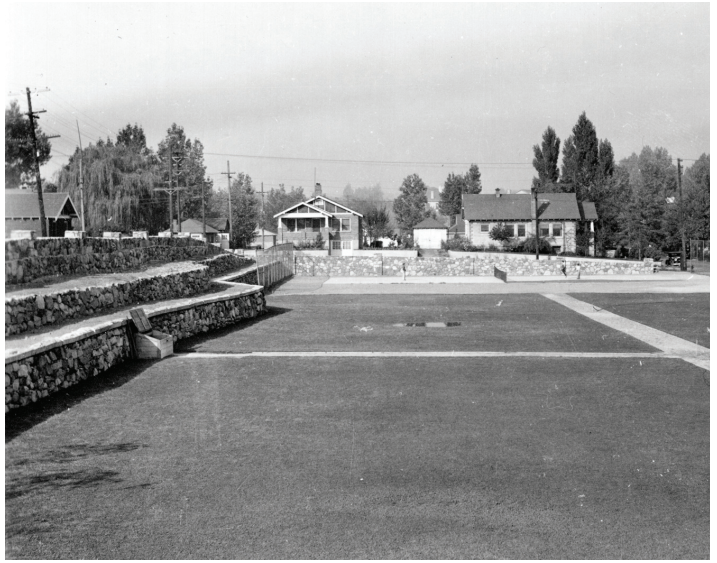
HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF STEWART PARK, PART ONE

by Kim Roberts

Stewart Park began its recorded life as a gravel and rock pit, dug out of the hillside that still surrounds the park along Wells and Moran Street. It became a refuse dump as Reno expanded south of the Truckee River. This all changed during the Great Depression. When the stock market crashed in 1929, Nevada's economy, then dependent on banking, transportation, mining and livestock, collapsed. Federal aid poured into the state through the WPA. By 1938 the WPA had paid out approximately \$1,600,000 for projects created in conjunction with the city of Reno. The Wells Addition featured prominently in this work. Many streets in the neighborhood were widened, graded and graveled, including Wells Avenue. Roberts Street was lowered by two feet between Wilson and Locust; this is still visible today. Prominent among these projects was the creation of Stewart Park, "transformed from a rubbish heap into an attractive city asset", according to Reno mayor John Cooper. The grounds were filled and leveled, tiered restraining walls were constructed and filled with plants, sprinklers were installed and a brick restroom built. The tennis courts were the star attraction of the park. The WPA proudly proclaimed that people who could not afford to belong to country clubs could now swim and play in the very places they had built.

During the 1940s and 50s, Stewart Park was among the city's most popular playgrounds. In 1945 the Reno Recreation Commission started a playground program and designated Stewart Park as a destination for small children, with nearby Pickett Park becoming the playground for larger boys and girls. In 1951, councilmen Marshall Guisti and Edwin Semenza called for a public



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meeting to upgrade the park, saying it "resembled a miniature golf course with abundant hillcock hazards." The grounds had settled since the initial excavation of rock and gravel, leaving the lawn very bumpy and uneven. Advertised as a facial and a beauty treatment, serious work was done. During the summer new sidewalks were laid and the walls resurfaced and strengthened, new sprinklers were planned and new roofs were put on the service buildings. A protective fence was planned along Stewart Street. Since the lawn was ripped out in November, the park was converted into a shallow skating rink until new sod was laid the next spring. Lights were erected for nighttime playground use and a future of winter ice skating.

This is an image worth considering. Think about what our park must have been like in the early 50s, well lit and vibrant, full of activity long after sunset, with people out playing late at night even in the cold of winter. This is something we can strive towards as we work to improve our neighborhood; it is a part of the social history of this place that goes far beyond the boundaries or the physical structures, creating a sense of place and community.

JANUARY 20, 2010

A woman lost her life
in our neighborhood tonight
An 18 year old boy didn't stop and look, at the sign

and took a life, aged 31...

Had he paused and noticed that

the sign asked him to Stop,

he would have seen that she was already in the
intersection,
And the web of lives that her life touched, in small and
maybe big

ways, would not be without her now
Why was he driving so fast? through a residential
neighborhood?

in the middle of the night?

Sober the cop said,
But in such a great, inattentive hurry...to where?

We don't know his story either, except that his life also changed
dramatically tonight
What could we have done?

The speed limit sign, the stop sign, and even the neighborhood
watch sign were all posted within a block from where her life was
taken,

small gestures

of an effort that cannot undo a life lost, from

hurtling acceleration's thoughtless consequence.

by Dagny Stapleton